

DREAMS AND JOURNEYS

BY
FREDEGOND SHOVE



OXFORD
BLACKWELL

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DREAMS AND JOURNEYS

Adventurers All.

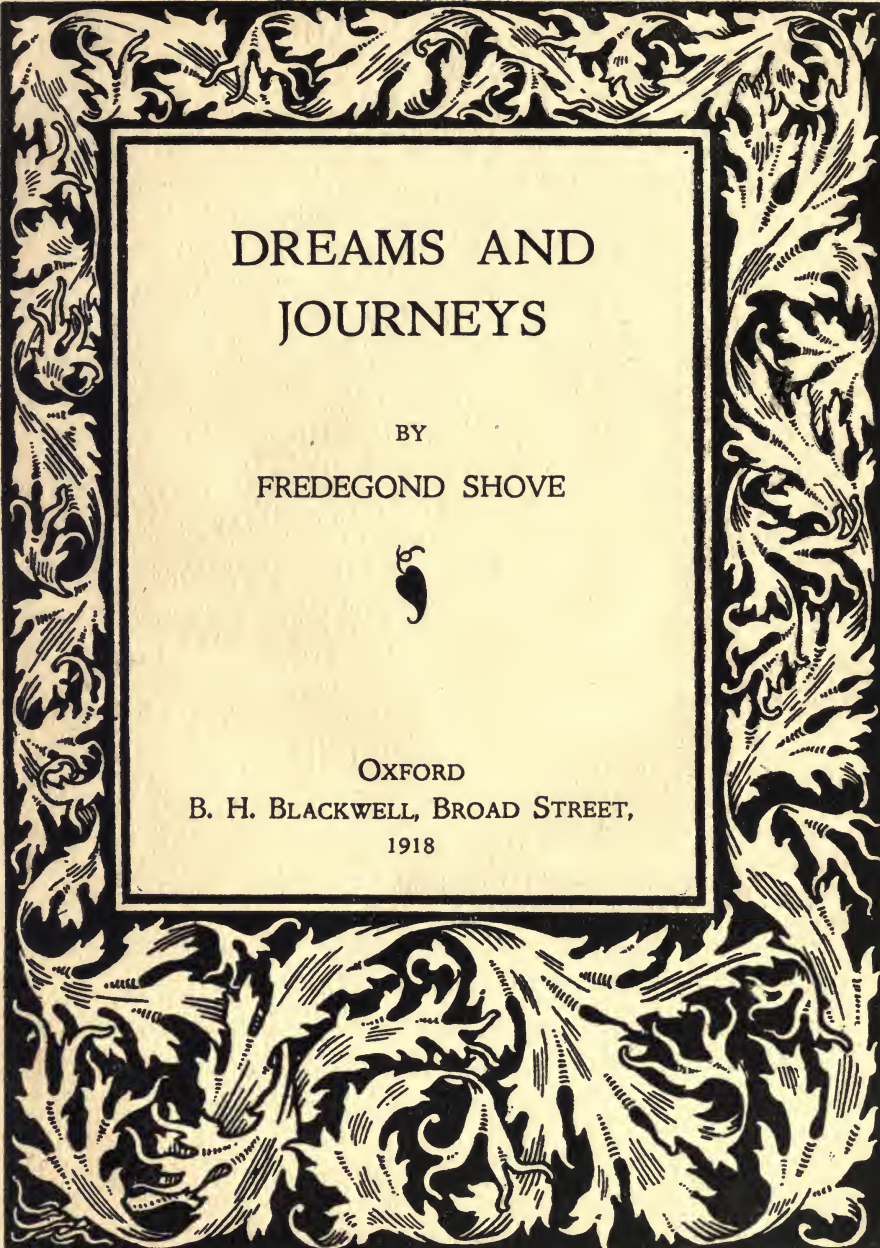
A SERIES OF YOUNG POETS
UNKNOWN
TO FAME.

(B)



Come my friends.... 'Tis not too late to seek a
newer world. It may be that the gulfs will wash
us down It may be we shall touch the happy isles
Yet our purpose holds... to sail beyond the sunset.

Ulysses



DREAMS AND JOURNEYS

BY
FREDEGOND SHOVE



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TO
LINA MIRRLEES

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A DREAM IN EARLY SPRING.

NOW when I sleep the thrush breaks through my dreams
With sharp reminders of the coming day :

After his call, one minute I remain
Unwaked, and on the darkness which is Me
There springs the image of a daffodil,
Growing upon a grassy bank alone,
And seeming with great joy his bell to fill
With drops of golden dew, which on the lawn
He shakes again, where they lie bright and chill.

His head is drooped ; the shrouded winds that sing
Bend him which way they will : never on earth
Was there before so beautiful a ghost ;
Alas ! he had a less than flower-birth,
And like a ghost indeed must shortly glide
From all but the sad cells of memory,
Where he will linger, an imprisoned beam,
Or fallen shadow of the golden world,
Long after this and many another dream.

MEMORY.

ONCE I lay still within the crater earth :
How long ago that was before my birth
I do not know ; but I remember well
What I then saw, still better how I heard
The wafer leaves of March when they were stirred
By stormy winds ; and how the snowflakes fell.

And I remember knowing there were seas
To which the ships went out on embassies
To bring back gold ; and, as I lay so still
That I could feel the moving earth, a song
Of sailors on a vessel, clear and strong,
Brought the sea near me, wide and blue and chill.

The cries of lambs in meadows winter-worn,
The sameness of those meadows, faintly green,
With a stiff hedge of naked thorn between,
Were then to me a knowledge, not a dream
As in my present, waking life they seem.
Much I remember of the life I led
Among the roots of flowers, when I was
Neither a burning creature nor a dead,

MEMORY ●

Cold, seed-like corpse : I saw the white clouds pass,
I knew the joys of summer and the fear
That Nature feels when her first leaf turns sere.
Oh nothing that is wild for spring or grief,
Woods twisted with despair, nor fallen tree,
The flying shadow or the falling leaf,
Are new, but they have long been known to me :—

I knew them when I was more infinite
Than living man, having no shape or sight,
No pain, no sorrow, joy nor self at all—
But that sweet nothingness the south wind knows
When over houses in the rain it blows,
And that pale calm through which the showers fall.

FOUR NIGHTS.

O WHEN I shut my eyes in spring
A choir of heaven's swans I see,
They sail on lakes of blue, and sing
Or shelter in a willow tree:
They sing of peace in heart and mind
Such as on earth you may not find.

When I lie down in summer-time
I still can hear the scythes that smite
The ripened flowers in their prime,
And still can see the meadows white.
In summer-time my rest is small,
If any rest I find at all.

In autumn when my eyes I close
I see the yellow stars ablaze
Among the tangled winds that rose
At sunset in a circled maze;
Like armoured knights, they ride the skies
And prick the closed lids of my eyes.

But when in winter-time I sleep
I nothing see, nor nothing hear;
The angels in my spirit keep
A silent watch and, being there,
They cause my soul to lie as dead—
A stream enchanted in her bed.

HARVEST.

DUST is there in the earth, of golden seed :
There's coral in the wave, and pearl as well
Sleep in the winds, a spirit in the shell,
Motes on the light, an echo in the reed ;
And there are also systems in the sky
Like waxen pollen scattered wide and far
Along the air in honeyed tracery ;
And in the river yellow pebbles are.

But these are nothing, measured by the grain
Of those fine longings which in fee I keep
Against that time when, out of falling rain,
My naked ghost shall walk the airy steep,
And, coming there, shall to her author give
Those visions back by which she now doth live.

IN THE CHURCHYARD.

MY skeleton one day will lie
Underneath the stiff wild grass
Through which the sweet breezes pass
On to immortality,
Carrying the seeds of men
And of flowers and of bees
And of animals and trees
To a world beyond our ken.
I shall be as dry as stone,
Voiceless as the broken clock
Which the windy showers mock
Since they stole away its tone ;
It can never sing again
To the holly trees in flower,
It can never tell the hour
To the village on the plain :
I shall never sing again
To the singing world, but shall
Lie beneath the grasses tall ;
Has my song been all in vain ?

IN THE CHURCHYARD

To the plaint of larch and fir
And the ivy in the spring
Have I added anything
Of my life's instinctive stir?
When my skull is crumbled quite,
Will my dancing ghost be free
Like an elf beneath a tree
In the stillness of the night?
Shall I play through twilight chill
When the air is sweet with hay?
Shall I dance the dusk away
In the shadow of an hill?
When the worm on me shall feed,
When my shape is no more whole,
Shall my disenchanted soul
Shake at twilight as a reed?
Will it shiver on the brink
Of the overbrimming stream?
Through it shall the north wind scream?
From it shall the wild birds drink?

THE WORLD.

I WISH this world and its green hills were mine,
But it is not ; the wandering shepherd star
Is not more distant, gazing from afar
On the unreaped pastures of the sea,
Than I am from the world, the world from me.
At night the stars on milky way that shine
Seem things one might possess, but this round green
Is for the cows that rest, these and the sheep :
To them the slopes and pastures offer sleep,
My sleep I draw from the far fields of blue,
Whence cold winds come and go among the few
Bright stars we see and many more unseen.

Birds sing on earth all day among the flowers,
Taking no thought of any other thing
But their own hearts, for out of them they sing :
Their songs are kindred to the blossom heads,
Faint as the petals which the blackthorn sheds,
And like the earth—not alien songs as ours.

THE WORLD ●

To them this greenness and this island peace
Are life and death and happiness in one ;
Nor are they separate from the white sun,
Or those warm winds which nightly wash the deep,
Or starlight in the valleys, or new sleep ;
And from these things they ask for no release.

But we can never call this world our own,
Because we long for it, and yet we know
That should the great winds call us, we should go ;
Should they come calling out across the cold,
We should rise up and leave the sheltered fold
And follow the great road to the unknown.
We should pass by the barns and haystacks brown,
Should leave the wild pool and the nightingale ;
Across the ocean we should set a sail
And, coming to the world's pale brim, should fly
Out to the very middle of the sky
On past the moon ; nor should we once look down.

THE GARDEN IN SPRING.

THE West has purple wings to spread
Above these tulips in their bed ;
The daffodils have tears to shed
In angel pity for the dead.

The cuckoo's voice is in the hill ;
The blackbird in the garden still
Calls to the wallflowers warm and sweet
To blossom at his yellow feet.

The daisies open wide and prink
Their snowy frills with vivid pink ;
The sun that now begins to sink
Gives the green earth his beams for drink.

The lilac bears his burden down
And sweeps the grass with purple crown,
Pouring his perfume on the air
For bees to carry everywhere.

The chestnut sheds her rosy sheaf—
As queens bestow a royal grief—
Upon the path where pebbles lie
Like shining fragments of the sky.

O world of heat ! O day in spring !
There is a song in each green thing.
O blossoms, teach my soul to sing
Before the frost has touched her wing.

AUTUMN IN THE GARDEN.

A SMOKE is on the flowers :
A haze is hung on high :
The trees look tall as towers
Against the spectral sky :
And like a sword the morning air
Strikes out the sunbeams wan and rare.

The shrunken leaves, and red,
Lie strewn upon the lawn :
The bough above my head
Snaps like a cross-bow drawn,
And slowly, measuring their flight,
The swallows soar to find the light.

The ivy, still in bloom,
Waits on with patient green
For winter's frosty gloom
When berries shall be seen—
Purple as those which Proserpine
About her brows in hell did twine.

I hear the railway train ;
Its voice is most forlorn ;
It quivers in the plain
Where poplars shine and corn
Is gathered into shocks of gold
Against the quickly coming cold.

IN A FIELD.

THE sun and moon I see
Beside me in the grass :
The moon, a daisy's face
As pure and fine as glass ;
The sun, a dandelion
As golden as a pound—
O what a firmament
Is this which I have found !

White stars the elm tree shakes
To twinkle where they lie
As bright upon the earth
As any in the sky.
This field is heaven's glass,
And gazing in I see
What disembodied joys
The future holds for me.

LIFE AND DEATH.

DEATH came out of a copse and sang,
With on his head a crown
Of parsley twined with violets and sorrel freshly sown :
About the woods his accents rang,
And through the world were blown.

Life, sitting by a willow tree,
Said, "Teach me how to sing,
For poets make no crowns for me,
No waxen lights they bring,
And no sweet perfumes offer me :
For you they pluck the spring."

DREAMS AND JOURNEYS.

THE apple trees are green with fruit,
In every rut blue thistles bloom,
And slowly, since the days are wet,
The corn gets ripe and burns the gloom
Of darker fields; the blackberries
Look coral pink along the hedge,
The gardens blaze with sunflowers,
The ponds are covered with green sedge;
It rains and rains: the little ducks,
That have no feathers yet but fluff,
Go paddling with their springtime cries
From pool to pool, content enough;
The strong black pigs enjoy their grass,
The children play till dusk comes on
Beset with storms; and so we pass
Day after day: the hollyhocks
Are mere brown paper since the rain;
The farmers grumble in their carts:
When will the sun come back again?
A little elfin boy I know,

DREAMS AND JOURNEYS ●

That plays in nettles all day long,
Does not remember sunny days
And sings a never-ending song
About the dappled cows at dusk,
The happy ducks and ruined plums ;
He sings this song to every one
That passes by, and sometimes comes,
Bringing a bunch of purple-heads,
To the back door for bread and tea :
How pale he is how paper-frail !
His arms are piteous things to see ;
He knows each passing tramp by name
And tells the stories of their lives ;—
A long procession of despair,—
Mad boys, wild men and jealous wives,
They travel in his childish brain
With shocking stealth, by secret means :
His mother hears him moan at night
The names of ancient gipsy queens,
Horse-dealers, quacks, and foreign youths
With monkey-jacks, of idiot churls,
Of misers draped in beggars' gowns,
And odd, untidy harlot-girls ;
Their music and the farthing dips

DREAMS AND JOURNEYS

By which they light their creaking souls
Along the staircase of his thoughts
Disturb his slumber where he rolls
Between the sheets,—a child of six
With touseled hair and twisted brain :
“Oh dear,” he murmurs to himself,
“When will the angels come again ?
They came one night, with pipes and drums ;
They were a silver band of joys,
Red cheeks they had and silver wings
And trumpets fit for princely boys ;
They sang and harped and played all night ;
The stars came floating in to hear,
And all this cobweb-crowd of tramps
Began to waste and disappear.—
White apples hang upon that tree
Outside my room, they’ll soon be pink :—
It must be nearly morning now :
The stars are out. It’s fine I think.”

SONG.

SPRING lights her candles everywhere,
But death still hangs upon the air :
The celandine through dusk is lit,
The redbreasts from the holly flit,
At night the violets spring to birth
Out of the mute, encrusted earth.

The wind has cast his winding sheet
(Which is the sky) and he goes fleet
Over the country in the rain,
Singing how all the world is vain
And how, of all things vainest, he
Journeys above both land and sea.

MOTION AND STILLNESS.

THE sea shells lie as cold as death
Under the sea ;
The clouds move in a wasted wreath
Eternally ;
The cows sleep on the tranquil slopes
Above the bay ;
The ships like evanescent hopes
Vanish away.

MAN TO HIS CREATOR.

THOU art a reaper and a gatherer
Of wild brown nuts. Thou furrowest the sea :
Thou shapest autumn, spring and death and me :
Thou knowest not Thy purpose, nor dost care :
And we make songs to please and ravish Thee,—
And sometimes, in the sunshine, Thou dost hear.

Thou makest meadows red with clover, white
With ox-eyed daisies, woods the sun turns brown ;
Rivers all full of shells and stars new-blown ;
Thou makest sleep and shadow and the night ;
And Thou Thyself hast neither shape nor sight,
And canst not even call Thy soul Thine own.

Thou madest me an house of bone and gave
The seeds of utterance upon my tongue :
Thenceforth Thy praises I have always sung
To the waste clouds and waters where they rave,
And to the winds that are in heaven hung
Like sheets for death—white symbols of the grave.

Thou madest earth with many elms to sigh
Their sad desires ; and Thou didst make the air ;
And they with me their loneliness declare,
Praising Thee ever sad and wearily :
Thou madest all things mortal, foul or fair :
But who made Thee ? O say before I die.

A MAN DREAMS THAT HE IS THE CREATOR.

(By kind permission of the Editor of *War and Peace*.)

I SAT in heaven like the sun
Above a storm when winter was :
I took the snowflakes one by one
And turned their fragile shapes to glass :
I washed the rivers blue with rain
And made the meadows green again.

I took the birds and touched their springs,
Until they sang unearthly joys :
They flew about on golden wings
And glittered like an angel's toys :
I filled the fields with flowers' eyes,
As white as stars in Paradise.

And then I looked on man and knew
Him still intent on death—still proud ;
Whereat into a rage I flew
And turned my body to a cloud :
In the dark shower of my soul
The star of earth was swallowed whole.

A WOOD CUTTER'S SONG.

A CHILD has eyes like dewberries ; a child has cheeks like flame ;
A child feels sudden love and hate, and sudden fear and
I was a child when to the woods out of the womb I came. [shame.
The woods have aged, and so have I : I am as old as care ;
My spirit is as dry as crust, my heart is cold and bare :—
Yet have I still a child's light laugh and still a child's strange stare.

A BIRCH TREE.

PLANT a birch tree on my grave
When you bury me ;
In all the wild, wet spring woods
There is no sweeter tree ;
She is so delicate, so rare, her body is so white,
And she cries like a gentle ghost,
All the long night.

I love her ; she shall be my lute
When I am dead ;
She shall carry all the earth's tunes
Into my small bed ;
She will not break the stir of wings
That are as fine as glass ;
Neither will let the rain away
On to the wild grass.

When stars come out above the earth
She will shake them down ;
All in a shower through her hair
They shall be blown ;
She knows the stars, and they know her,—
O what a lovely thing
Is a young birch tree growing up
In the green spring.

THE RAINBOW.

I WOKE in the dawn, I woke in the snow :
God sent me a shaft, God sent me a bow.
A rainbow he sent, with a shaft of pure sun ;
And in heaven I knew that spring had begun.

A SOUL.

IF I have a soul,
It grows like a flame;
It is wingless and naked
And quivers with shame—
With shame at the world,
And with fear of the dark
That sooner or later must swallow its spark.

THE WORK OF AGES.

L EAN Misery's a little child
With chilblains on his hands and feet ;
Oddly enough, I think he smiled
As I went by him down the street :
Oh what a devil I must be
If Misery can smile at me !

Ten thousand million years ago
He smiled, and then I did not heed,
The child went naked in the snow
That I was born to clothe and feed ;
And with a face as bland as stone
I passed and left him all alone.

If he forgets my wickedness,
It shows how deep the guilt must lie,
Heaped in the centuries whose press
Has crushed it from his memory :
Oh little child ! Oh Misery !
Oh centuries ! Oh Monster—Me !

THE WORK OF AGES

Great brooding Love a mother was,
Yet now her milk is all gone dry,
She sits in corners and she has
Her children for a rosary :
Their corpses strung together deck
The mother's bosom and her neck.

I killed and starved the children : Yes,
I'm worse than callous, since you see
I am a lusty murderess ;
And you are just as bad as me ;
Unless like love you brood and weep,
Or smile like Misery, or sleep

Like Freedom worn within your chains.
Oh Freedom wake—get up and give
The starving mother back her gains,
And let the starving children live,
And slay the monsters in us all—
Under whose whips we creep and crawl.

THE WATER MILL.

THERE is a mill, an ancient one,
Brown with rain, and dry with sun,
The miller's house is joined with it
And in July the swallows flit
To and fro, in and out,
Round the windows, all about ;
The mill wheel whirrs and the waters roar
Out of the dark arch by the door,
The willows toss their silver heads,
And the phloxes in the miller's beds
 Turn red, turn gray,
 With the time of day,
And smell sweet in the rain, then die away.
The miller's cat is a tabby, she
Is as lean as a healthy cat can be,
She plays in the loft, where the sunbeams stroke
The sacks fat backs, and beetles choke
In the floury dust. The wheel goes round
And the miller's wife sleeps fast and sound.

THE WATER MILL

There is a clock inside the house,
Very tall, and very bright,
It strikes the hour when shadows drowse,
Or showers make the windows white;
Loud and sweet, in rain and sun,
The clock strikes, and the work is done.
The miller's wife and his eldest girl
Clean and cook, while the mill wheels whirl.
The children take their meat to school,
And at dusk they play by the twilit pool;
 Bare-foot, bare-head,
 Till the day is dead,
And their mother calls them in to bed.
The supper stands on the clean-scrubbed board,
And the miller drinks like a thirsty lord;
The young men come for his daughter's sake,
But she never knows which one to take:
She drives her needle, and pins her stuff,
While the moon shines gold, and the lamp shines buff.

SONNET.

SLEEP, get a dream out of your secret chest,
From that long drawer where the great visions lie
With folded wings. Sleep, pick me out the best ;
Then, as we see the moon bound in the sky
By a great ring of cold on winter nights
And seeming shut away, my frozen soul
Shall open to the prick of northern lights,
And by that guest that flies from pole to pole
Of human consciousness, but is not heard
Except when a great stillness lies beneath
Supernal calm, my spirit shall be stirred,
Calling on what it once believed was death
As to its source—and entering, O sleep,
Into eternal peace, no more to weep.

THE CUCKOO IN THE ORCHARD.

THE cuckoo calls me from the hill,
I lie among the stalks of grass,
I see the clouds that ride at will
On heaven's pass :
I feel the sweet, cold necks of flowers,
Their virgin heads that shine with showers,
I know the world is full of powers
Remote and chill.

The cuckoo speaks inside my breast,
And what he asks I do not know—
Am I to cast my spirit's vest ?
Am I to go
Over the grasses to the rim
Of meadow world, in search of him
That knows no city vast and dim,
And no unrest ?

THE NEW GHOST.

“And he casting away his garment rose and came to Jesus.”

AND he cast it down, down, on the green grass,
Over the young crocuses, where the dew was—
He cast the garment of his flesh that was full of death,
And like a sword his spirit showed out of the cold sheath.

He went a pace or two, he went to meet his Lord,
And, as I said, his spirit looked like a clean sword,
And seeing him the naked trees began shivering,
And all the birds cried out aloud as it were late spring.

And the Lord came on, He came down, and saw
That a soul was waiting there for Him, one without flaw,
And they embraced in the churchyard where the robins play,
And the daffodils hang down their heads, as they burn away.

The Lord held his head fast, and you could see
That He kissed the unsheathed ghost that was gone free—
As a hot sun, on a March day, kisses the cold ground ;
And the spirit answered, for he knew well that his peace was found.

THE NEW GHOST

The spirit trembled, and sprang up at the Lord's word—
As on a wild, April day, springs a small bird—
So the ghost's feet lifting him up, he kissed the Lord's cheek,
And for the greatness of their love neither of them could speak.

But the Lord went then, to show him the way,
Over the young crocuses, under the green may
That was not quite in flower yet—to a far-distant land ;
And the ghost followed, like a naked cloud holding the sun's hand.

MANY THINGS.

I WANT no angel in a fiery hood
To show my soul the way,
Nor any creed to tell me to be good ;
I need not pray :

The stars that prick my conscience where I stand
Are what I most admire,
The dawn that opens death with beauty's hand
Fills me with fire.

The sea and moon, like life and death in one,
Teach me to live and die,
And my imagination like the sun
Fills all the sky.

So, if I find a shell on any beach,
My mortal nature seems
To glorify herself and overreach
Her quickest dreams.

Long, long, immortal lives in one short span
My soul has spent,
Thanks to those riches Nature gave to Man
For no intent.

FEAR.

FEAR'S like a worm that lies curled
Asleep at the root of the world ;
Gnawing away in the night—

Sleeping again when it's light.
“Give me a charm against fear
Light me a torch as you go,”
Says the world to each person in turn
When he is dying, but—No ;

Love is the root of the world
And fear like a cobra lies curled
Gnawing and sucking the bark
Of this heavenly root in the dark.

THE FARMER, 1917.

I SEE a farmer walking by himself
In the ploughed field, returning like the day
To his dark nest. The plovers circle round
In the gray sky; the blackbird calls; the thrush
Still sings—but all the rest have gone to sleep.
I see the farmer coming up the field,
Where the new corn is sown, but not yet sprung;
He seems to be the only man alive
And thinking through the twilight of this world.
I know that there is war behind those hills,
And I surmise, but cannot see the dead,
And cannot see the living in their midst—
So awfully and madly knit with death.
I cannot feel, but know that there is war,
And has been now for three eternal years,
Behind the subtle cinctures of those hills.
I see the farmer coming up the field,
And as I look, imagination lifts
The sullen veil of alternating cloud,

THE FARMER, 1917

And I am stunned by what I see behind
His solemn and uncompromising form :
Wide hosts of men who once could walk like him
In freedom, quite alone with night and day,
Uncounted shapes of living flesh and bone,
Worn dull, quenched dry, gone blind and sick, with war ;
And they are him and he is one with them ;
They see him as he travels up the field.
O God, how lonely freedom seems to-day !
O single farmer walking through the world,
They bless the seed in you that earth shall reap,
When they, their countless lives, and all their thoughts,
Lie scattered by the storm : when peace shall come
With stillness, and long shivers, after death.

THE DESIRED PLACE.

(By kind permission of the Editor of *War and Peace*.)

THE rivers in the moon
To golden ice are turned,
Mountains are made of glass
Where formerly they burned;
May it come quick and soon
The time when earth shall freeze,
To make another moon
With frozen hills and trees.

THE MESSAGE OF AGE.

(By kind permission of the Editor of *The Nation*.)

I COME to you to sing of happiness,
Which many years I sought for in my soul
As though it were some philosophic goal:
I found it not, but only emptiness.
And then I sought for pleasure in the press
Of those delights no creeds or thoughts control,
The beat of cymbals, and the foaming bowl,
And, living madly, knew content still less.
Yet happiness was here at hand for me,
In cool and even contours of my room—
With light just flowing from the sober north—
And on the wharves where solemn steamers loom,
In all their mystery of going forth
To taste the sullen splendor of the sea.

WAKING DREAMS.

HOW have I used my eyes and ears?
Oh have I really seen the spring?
Men live and die, and barely slip
Out of the world, remembering
What earth was like ; preoccupied
With furniture, each one allied
By some frayed cobweb-chain of thought
To something in infinity,
Men live and die.

But I remember how earth looks
Throughout the year. There come to me
Pictures of air, of soil and sun,
Or quite new visions of the sea,
Just in that darkened slit of time
That slides between the lids of sleep
And sundown. In the mornings, too,
When leaves upon my lattice weep
Their languid joys ; on daffodils
I wonder then ; and in dark hills
Where streams are born, my fancies go
Purged of all flesh, as white as snow ;
They brush the long-leaved daffodils.

WAKING DREAMS ●

Or if I wake in full midnight,
I think on shepherds in the moon,
Sitting in clusters, on lean peaks,
Each piping some archaic tune
To flocks of rams with yellow horns,
That wander in and out of sight
Beside the stream whose face is bright,
Whose mind is dead ; or in the grass
That shines as pale as polished glass.
I think of these things in the night.

Sometimes I trace my childhood's path
Through Gloucestershire. The Cotswolds grey
And round and rough I travel through,
Stooping to pick wild harebells ; they
Shake like thin lyrics, beautiful
Translucent heads, and make the sound
Of spirits talking underground
 Rise on the wind.
 And then I find
Those strange crisp stones,
 Forked by the wind,—
Fossils, each traced with delicate
Long, fan-shaped marks the hand of death
Cannot erase. Are they dead stars

Come down, come down, sent hurtling through
The midnight cold, and bearing still
The print of their substantial being
That was as earth's? shall we fall too?

Dumb wizened stars whose glory's done
I used to hold them in my hand,
And think about this universe
Which is too big to understand.

Now let me shut thought's wings: then fall
Down through the sea until I reach
The strata of that bottom-beach
From whose depth there is no recall.
And sitting there what miracles
Of shelly-branch shall I behold,
What tree-trunks lifting misty arms
Embracing the sepulchral cold
Of chasms where recumbent giants
Wallow, encompassed by green foam?
Through what huge chambers shall I roam?
And what dull traffic shall I hear
Of ships above me everywhere?

In such a waking-dream I would
Pass from existence if I could,

Still dreaming underneath the sea.
 To fumble with the cosmic key
 That turns the lock between one world
 And the next, would that not be luck,
 While all around me waves conspired
 To pull me back—to squeeze, and suck
 My spirit in? my spirit still
 Should turn, and try, nor could be stayed
 Till from the sea's unstable heart
 Into eternity she strayed;

Into the star of thought—of mind
 So clean, so perfect, so divined
 Never to touch the gross balloon,
 The sensual world that hangs beneath
 In ulcerous imitation of
 That visionary world where death
 Is not; neither deceit,—the tick
 That tortures the unhappy quick
 Of death's foul mind
 To ugly, ugly counterfeit
 Of life—pure life that I have known
 To shine so radiant thro' a stone
 The light has almost struck me blind.

How long—how long before I die
 And into understanding fly,
 To live and breathe eternally
 In what I now divine to be
 Hidden beneath the bulk of things,
 As under heavy-mantled hills
 One can divine the secret springs
 Whose essence is invisible?

How long before the sensual world
 That gives such signs of fire beneath
 Is opened to us all? How long
 Before we conquer ancient death?
 In dreams I know it sometimes and
 Rush through all heavens to the last
 And fieriest; then (being consumed)
 Am thrown back on the grinning past,
 Among the sepulchres of snails,
 The spokes of old crustaceæ,
 The bones of ships, the bowels of whales:
 All the vast lumber of the sea
 Encumbers me.

Then dreams recede and morning pipes
 Sound on the lonely downs again,

WAKING DREAMS ●

And my soul that was almost drowned
Looks out of her dark window-pane
And sees the sun whose reedy beams
Suck up the vapour of her dreams.

From the days back she springs—and goes
Flying to the celestial snows
Of visionary happiness,
That every living mind must bless,
Must welcome—as the one escape
From life's half strangled outer shape.

So will she fly till it is time
(Even in a million centuries)
To realise those waking dreams
Which are but pin-pricks in the skies
And promise how the soul shall gaze
On heaven's unreflected blaze
When she has done with nights and days,
Terrors and Joys, Journeys and Dreams.

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